

on terror. The people of Iraq and Afghanistan are building new democracies and defying the terrorists, and America is standing with them. Both countries are assuming greater responsibility for their own security, which will help our troops return home as quickly as possible with the honor they have earned.

I thank the House for its quick action and look forward to working with the Senate so that all of my top priorities are included in the final legislation.

Statement on Senate Action To Allow for Environmentally Responsible Energy Exploration in a Small Part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

March 16, 2005

I applaud today's vote in the Senate to allow for environmentally responsible energy exploration in a small part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A reliable domestic supply of energy is important to America's security and prosperity. This project will keep our economy growing by creating jobs and ensuring that businesses can expand. And it will make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy, eventually by up to a million barrels of oil a day.

I also call on the Congress to pass a comprehensive national energy plan that will diversify supply, increase conservation and efficiency, and upgrade our energy infrastructure.

Message on the Observance of Nowruz

March 16, 2005

I send greetings to those celebrating Nowruz.

Nowruz marks the arrival of a new year and the celebration of life. It has long been an opportunity to spend time with family and friends and enjoy the beauty of nature.

Many Americans who trace their heritage to Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Central Asia observe this special occasion to preserve their rich heritage and ensure that their values and tradi-

tions are passed on to future generations. This festival also reminds all Americans of the diversity that has made our Nation stronger and better.

Laura and I send our best wishes for peace and prosperity in the New Year.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Representative Rob Portman To Be United States Trade Representative

March 17, 2005

Good morning. I'm pleased to announce my nomination of Congressman Rob Portman to be our next United States Trade Representative. For more than a decade, Rob Portman has been a superb Representative of the Second District of Ohio. He's earned the trust of his constituents and the admiration of his colleagues. He brings a record of achievement to this new assignment.

As a Member of the House leadership, Rob has shown he can bring together people of differing views to get things done. He's been a tireless advocate for America's manufacturers and entrepreneurs. He's a former international trade lawyer who has shown a deep dedication to free and fair trade, and now he will bring that commitment to his new role as U.S. Trade Representative.

As an Ohioan, Rob knows firsthand that millions of American jobs depend on exports, including one in every five factory jobs. Our country is home to about 5 percent of the world's population, and that means 95 percent of our potential customers are abroad. To keep our economy growing and creating jobs, we need to continue opening foreign markets to American products. Rob knows that America's farmers and workers can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere in the world, so long as the rules are fair.

Under the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Bob Zoellick, the U.S. Trade Representative's office helped bring China and Taiwan into the World Trade Organization

and worked with Congress to secure Trade Promotion Authority. Bob and his team have completed free trade agreements with 12 nations on 5 continents, that will open a combined market of 124 million consumers for America's farmers, manufacturers, and small-business owners. I appreciate his fine service, and I will continue to count on his wisdom and good judgment in his new post as Deputy Secretary of State.

When he is confirmed by the Senate, Rob Portman will build on Ambassador Zoellick's achievements. I've asked him to take on a bold agenda. We need to continue to open markets abroad by pursuing bilateral free trade agreements with partners around the world. We need to finish our work to establish a Free Trade Area of the Americas, which will become the largest free trade zone in the world. We need to complete the Doha Round negotiations within the World Trade Organization, to reduce global barriers to trade. We must continue to vigorously enforce the trade laws on the books so that American businesses and workers are competing on a level playing field.

Rob is the right man to carry out this agenda. I've known him for many years. He is a good friend, a decent man, and a skilled negotiator. He understands that trade creates jobs, raises living standards, and lowers prices for families here at home. Rob also understands that as the world trades more freely, it becomes more free and prosperity abounds.

Rob Portman will be a fine leader for the dedicated men and women who work in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. I'm grateful he's agreed to serve. I'm grateful to his wife, Jane, and their three children, Jed, Will, and Sally. I urge the Senate to promptly confirm this outstanding nominee as America's Trade Representative, and I look forward to welcoming Rob into my Cabinet.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:36 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Representative Portman. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Shamrock Presentation Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

March 17, 2005

Taoiseach, thank you very much, and welcome back to the White House. It's—Laura and I are delighted to continue the tradition of accepting the crystal bowl overflowing with shamrocks. It's a wonderful gift symbolizing Ireland's world-renowned hospitality.

Today is a joyous celebration of the deep friendship between the Irish and the American peoples. The histories and bloodlines of our two countries are deeply intertwined. And that is why, in cities and towns across our Nation, millions of Americans celebrate this feast day of the Apostle of Ireland.

Saint Patrick used the three leaves of the shamrock to illustrate the mystery of the Trinity. The shamrock has also come to represent the unity that people can achieve when they commit themselves to peace and freedom.

In America, we have a phrase for that—it's called *e pluribus unum*, out of many, one. You'll find that on the Great Seal of the United States, which, by the way, was largely designed by Charles Thompson, a native of Derry.

The hearts of the Irish burn for freedom, and they brought that love for liberty with them to America. The Irish fought in our Nation's War of Independence, and over the past two centuries, they devoted their blood and sweat to defending and building America. When terrorists struck our Nation, the Irish were well-represented among the firefighters and police officers who sacrificed their lives to save others at the World Trade Center. In a great Irish tradition, marines preparing to retake the city of Fallujah prepared for battle to the strains of Lieutenant Colonel Paul Sweeney's bagpipes echoing across the Iraqi plains.

The Irish have a way of turning adversity into opportunity. About a million came to our shores seeking refuge from the great potato famine. Once they came, they built, and they toiled, and they produced. They constructed railroads and great cathedrals. They even helped build the U.S. Capitol. They added